

U.S. MARSHALS OPERATION



OCTOBER 22-28, 2006

For Immediate Release

November 2, 2006

Contact: Kevin Connolly
Supervisory Inspector
United States Marshals Service
Capital Area Regional Fugitive Task Force
Richmond Division
(703) 898-9701

“OPERATION FALCON III” FUELED BY ADAM WALSH ACT ROUNDS UP THOUSANDS OF FUGITIVES NATIONWIDE

(Richmond, VA) – Deputy United States Marshals teamed up with thousands of fellow federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies to conduct the largest ever round up of fugitive sex-offenders and wanted gang members. Dubbed “Operation FALCON III” (Federal And Local Cops Organized Nationally), Deputy Marshals and their fellow task force members arrested 10,773 felony fugitives. This number includes 1,659 sex offenders and 364 documented gang members. **In the Richmond area, over 30 criminal investigators from four federal agencies, two state agencies, and six local agencies joined forces to arrest 59 individuals wanted on 82 outstanding warrants.**

“These numbers mean safer streets for the citizens of communities all over this country,” said Marshals Service Director John Clark. “We have not only brought those wanted fugitives to justice, but we have hopefully brought a bit of peace to their communities.”

Honing in on sexual predators and fugitive gang members, Operation FALCON III’s success comes on the heels of the “Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act,” which was signed into law by President Bush on July 27, 2006. The Act makes it a federal felony, punishable by up to ten years imprisonment, for convicted sex offenders who fail to register and who travel in interstate or foreign commerce. The U.S. Marshals Service was designated by the Act as the agency to lead the national effort to track down and arrest these fugitive felons.

“The Attorney General and the Director consider Operation FALCON III to be a significant event marking the Department’s effort to combat sex offenders and crimes against children in conjunction with the Adam Walsh Act,” said Arthur D. Roderick, the Marshals Service’s Assistant Director for Investigative Services. “There is no question the collective criminal investigative resources of the Marshals and our federal, state, and local partners made a major contribution to this important crime initiative,” he said.

Acting U.S. Marshal John Hackman praised the operation’s success and identified those contributing agencies in the Richmond area: United States Marshals Service (USMS); United State Attorneys Office for the Eastern District of Virginia; Housing and Urban Development (HUD-OIG); Social Security Administration (SSA-OIG); Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE); Virginia State Police (VSP); Virginia Department of Corrections (VADOC); Richmond Police Department (RPD); Richmond Sheriff’s Office (RSO); Richmond Redevelopment Housing Authority (RRHA); Henrico County Police Department (HCPD); Chesterfield County Police Department (CCPD); and, Petersburg Police Department (PPD).

U.S. MARSHALS OPERATION



OCTOBER 22-28, 2006

Of the 59 individuals arrested in the Richmond area: 17 were arrested for sex related offenses (Sex offenses committed against children (7), Sex offenses committed against adults (5) and Failure to Register as a Sex Offender (4)). Some of the sex offenses charged include Strong Arm Rape, Abduction, Kidnapping of a Minor, Aggravated Sexual Battery of a Minor and Taking Indecent Liberties With a Minor. The remaining 42 others were arrested based on warrants charging them with Murder (1), Attempted Murder (4), Armed Robbery (2), Assault or Aggravated Assault (5), Firearms Offenses (4), Drugs (4), Immigration (10), Burglary / Larceny / Theft (7), Child Neglect (2) and miscellaneous felony offenses (3).

Two of those arrested were documented gang members. Firearms and ammunition were seized during two of the arrests, to include an assault rifle and a sawed off shotgun.

Most of those arrested were located in the City of Richmond, Henrico County, Chesterfield County, and Petersburg. One Richmond City rape suspect fled to Baltimore, MD where he was arrested by FALCON III task force members working in Baltimore City based on a lead developed by Richmond area investigators. Another suspect charged with Failure to Register as a Sex Offender in Virginia was arrested by FALCON III task force members near Syracuse, New York based on information provided by Richmond area task force members. Both are awaiting extradition back to Virginia.

Sexual Predator Arrest Highlight #1: Wayne Jerome Thomas (36) has an extensive criminal history in this area including a conviction for the Sexual Battery of woman in Richmond in 2002. Following his release from prison, Thomas was required to register as a sex offender with the Virginia State Police. He failed to properly register and was convicted of Failure to Register as a Sex Offender earlier this year. On day two of the Operation, Thomas was charged by the Richmond Police Department with the Abduction and Rape of a 17 year old female, occurring the previous day. FALCON III team members hunted Thomas down and arrested him as he was working on a trash truck in the City of Richmond. The Virginia State Police conducted an immediate investigation and filed additional charges against Thomas for violations of his sex offender registration requirements.

Sexual Predator Arrest Highlight #2: David Lockwood (55) was convicted in New York of Rape and Sodomy of three girls, ages 11, 13 and 14 in 1993 on numerous occasions. He was charged by the Virginia State Police with Failure to Register as a Sex Offender in November of 2005 after having relocating to Virginia. He returned to New York and registered with the Sex Offender Registry there. Operation FALCON III investigators in Richmond developed information placing Lockwood at a new address previously unknown to New York authorities. FALCON III team members from Syracuse arrested Lockwood in the early morning hours on October 27th. He is awaiting extradition back to Virginia and is being investigated in New York for suspected Failure to Register violations there.

"This operation, along with our past FALCON efforts, provides a clear indication of what law enforcement agencies can accomplish when there is cooperation on all levels—federal, state and local," said Acting U.S. Marshal John Hackman. "When we share information and pool our resources towards a common goal, the results are safer communities for our children and a more secure homeland in the Richmond area."

Chuck Rosenberg, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, added, "The Marshals have well led this important collaborative effort. Operation FALCON has been an overwhelming success. Our message is clear – if you are a fugitive, we will find you."

U.S. MARSHALS OPERATION



OCTOBER 22-28, 2006

Fugitives whose cases were adopted by Operation FALCON III were sought by the Marshals Service, ATF, DEA, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of the Inspector General; Department of Homeland Security, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, other federal, state, and local agencies, United States Attorneys, and courts at every level of government. Additionally, Operation FALCON III task force members handled cases referred by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, as well as those of foreign fugitives believed to be in this country. The Marshals Service also received support from the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) at the Department of Justice. Interpol and the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service assisted in the investigations of persons wanted by law enforcement worldwide. Seven foreign and seven international fugitives who were arrested during Operation FALCON III now face deportation or extradition proceedings.

Director Clark expressed his deep gratitude to officers from every agency that participated in Operation FALCON III. "I applaud the accomplishments of every deputy Marshal, police officer, detective, trooper, investigator, deputy sheriff, and special agent who put their investigative efforts to the test and their lives on the line to make communities across the country safe," Clark said.

"For many of these men and women participating in FALCON III, they were just doing their jobs; but I'm sure families across the country would beg to differ, especially when it comes to the safety of our children."

PHOTOS/VIDEOS AVAILABLE

The Marshals Service has photos of actual arrests during the Operation available to press at www.usmarshals.gov/falcon3, as well as fact sheets on arrests nationwide and in each of the participating districts. Dossiers on the "FALCON 15," describing 15 of the most significant cases closed during the Operation are available to media at the site. A ten-minute B-roll video package for broadcasters will be available for satellite distribution on November 2, at 2:00 – 2:15 pm EST (11:00 – 11:15 am PST) and at 7:00 – 7:15 pm EST (4:00 – 4:15 pm PST) at C-Band coordinates (IA 6 T-11 Downlink Frequency 3920 V 93 degrees WL), and on November 3, at 4:00 – 4:15 am EST (1:00 – 1:15 am PDT) at C-Band coordinates (IA 6 T-17 Downlink Frequency 4040 V 93 degrees WL).

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

A complete list of all of the federal, state, and local agencies that participated in Operation FALCON is available at the Marshals Service website at www.usmarshals.gov.